3: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1936) 1950 FL11 Luo FL11

The people of the home press them to eat, but they refuse, so a goat is brought into the hut and shown to them. It is taken by the husband's eldest brother. Then they eat. The mother-in-law and the father-in-law offer a gourdful of beer to their daughter's husband, after taking a sip from it themselves, and he drinks from it and passes it to his senior brother. The husband's brother then presents a gourdful of beer to the father-in-law. When the feast is finished the husband's people depart for their home.

Ciemo

It was remarked that after defloration a bride is given a small pubic covering and a *ciemo* or 'tail'. This last is the sign of a woman's married status, and I wish to say a few words about it before concluding my article. Till recent times girls, like youths, were naked, except when they wore some small covering for ornament at public ceremonies, and it was only after her marriage had been consummated that a woman began to wear a 'tail'. The one handed to the bride after defloration is borrowed from her husband's brother's wife. Later she is given one of her own. Up till the final ceremonies of marriage a bride may remove her *ciemo* when in her parents' home, though she must wear it in her husband's home. Once she is fully married she must never be without it, and even to-day, when women wear trade cloth, they wear their 'tails' as well. In the old days a married woman usually wore nothing in front, but she was never without her *ciemo*. Indeed, I was told that a husband may divorce his wife for being without it. Women have two kinds, one for everyday wear and a more elaborate one for ceremonial occasions. A divorced woman continues to wear her 'tail' if she has borne her husband a child. Otherwise she discards it. A widow's first act on hearing of her husband's death is to remove her *ciemo* and throw it on to the roof of her hut.

Rèsumè

LES COUTUMES DE MARIAGE PARMI LES LUO DE KENYA

La forme coutumière du mariage parmi les Luo comprend plusieurs étapes. Un jeune homme, ayant choisi sa future épouse et obtenu son consentement, engage des pourparlers avec ses parents. S'il est accepté comme prétendant, une partie de ses amis enlèvent la jeune fille et l'emmènent chez le futur époux où, dans la hutte des célibataires chez lui, elle est défloreé en présence de sa sœur et d'autres jeunes filles de son propre village qui l'ont suivie à cet endroit. Après une semaine environ, la famille de la mariée fournit un festin, qui est consommé chez la mère du futur époux. Quelques jours plus tard, la mariée rentre chez ses parents, accompagnée par des jeunes filles de son village et des membres de la famille du futur époux. A ce moment, l'époux doit commencer la remise du bétail de mariage et, jusqu'à ce que le paiement soit complet, la mariée le quitte de temps en temps et retourne dans son propre foyer, d'où le futur l'enlève avec un semblant de violence. Lorsque tout le bétail a été remis, l'époux peut garder la mariée, mais il ne construit une hutte séparée pour elle qu'après la naissance d'un enfant. Jusque-là, le couple habite la hutte des célibataires.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

poisoned arrows have fallen into disuse; there was a medicine man in Gemi country named Opondo who used to make and vend the poison. The Kisumu people also had an arrow poison maker. The poison is said to be composed of snake poison and certain herbs. Nearly all of these people wear sandals of a single thickness of skin when travelling.

Musical instruments.—Their harps have eight strings and are the same as those of Northern Kavirondo (Figs. 8, 10); the drum is covered with cow hide; they are called *Thém*. Their drums are also similar to those of Northern Kavirondo and are called *Bûl* (Fig. 9). The women also make hand harps of *mtama* stalks called *Odundu*.

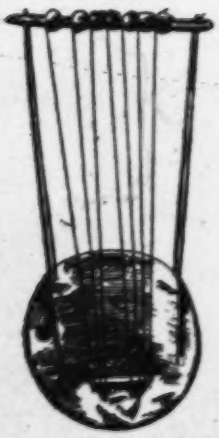

FIG. 8.—HARP: NILOTIC KAVIRONDO.

FIG. 9.—NATIVE OF LUO TRIBE, JA-LUO GROUP. PROFESSIONAL DANCER.

FIG. 10.—REED HARP FROM KAVIRONDO.

Tobacco and bhang.—These people smoke and chew tobacco; only a few take snuff. Both sexes smoke and chew tobacco. *Bhang* or Indian hemp is smoked separately in a water pipe. Only men smoke *bhang*. Young fighting men are not allowed to smoke it.

Tembo or pombe.—This is made from *mtama* or *wimbi* either singly or mixed. Both sexes drink; young women do not drink with the men, the old women however do so.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

Personal marks, etc.—They draw the six middle incisors in the lower jaw. 304
If a man does not have these teeth drawn it is said that his wife will die soon after marriage. The women tattoo a pattern on the chest and stomach, consisting of thin curved lines of dots on each side reaching round to near the spine, where they turn upwards. Males are not tattooed. The tattooing is done simply for ornament.

Circumcision.—They do not circumcise. If a man has killed an enemy in war he shaves his head three days after his return from fighting. He moreover 783
does not enter his village until a live fowl has been hung round his neck, the 727
fowl is then decapitated and the head of the fowl left hanging from the man's neck. Shortly after his return a feast is made to the man who has been killed, in order that his spirit shall not come and trouble the victor.

Dress, etc.—Unmarried men go naked (Plate V). Married men who have a 291
child wear a small piece of goat skin; this piece of goat skin is a most important 576
matter for a married man, for although practically useless as a covering he must on [606]
no account call to see his mother-in-law without this dress or she will be desperately hurt and insist on his paying up a goat. Even if he is properly clothed in European garments he must wear his goat skin underneath. Unmarried girls wear no clothes (Plate VI). Married women wear a tail of strings behind but not in front, like the Northern Kavirondo. Married women when they go to [574]
visit another village wear a goat skin slung from the shoulder, upon which curious patterns are cut. When a married woman first shows the tail, her husband presents her with a goat, which she sends to her father. It is very bad manners in a married woman to serve up food to her husband without wearing her tail, and the husband will probably refuse to eat the food. This rule even holds if the woman should be wearing garments of cloth. If a man touches a woman's tail it is said that he wishes to bewitch her, even the husband must not touch it; if this rule is broken it is necessary to kill a goat.

Many of the Ja-Luo affect rather a notable ornamentation of the ear; about 301
fifteen small holes are pierced along the outer edge of the ear and in each hole a 304
ring of brass is inserted, and on the front side the brass is flattened out like a small leaf, to the outside extremity of each ring is attached a blue bead. In the lowest hole in the lobe of the ear a plain brass ring is inserted.

For a long time I thought that these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of 301
the variety known as *kibsi*, but upon inquiry this was indignantly repudiated, and [172]
it was explained that these beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood of the Margolia Hills after a heavy thunderstorm, and that it was believed that they descended with the rain. Some of the chiefs also wear beads of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole; these beads were formerly of great value and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead; they were picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is Nya-Luo, and it is thought by some authorities that these beads have wandered down in ages past from the direction of Egypt; in fact some of the more Northern Nilotic people tell you that they

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

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Colloyyo E. KLEINMANN & Co Photo by WINCH, Harold

Kavirondo natives of Kitotos
Nilotic group or Ja-luo
The centre figure is an unmarried girl: the figures to right and left are married women
(Note decorated goat skin, sign of marriage)

[End plate VI]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4

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that she left and went on to the Shekwi people in Nyole, where the great grandfather of Mgahanya married her, and she taught him all the secrets of the art of rain-making. The following is the genealogy of the family of rain-making chiefs:—

Agine or Ashue (married the witch).
|
Luchiri.
|
Namonwa.
|
Mgahanya.

The Cult of the "MKIA."

L B 291 171

As is well known, the dress of the female sex in Kavirondo is probably the most scanty in the world. Such as it is, perhaps its most distinctive feature is the tail, or "*mkia*," as it is termed by the Swahilis. This is common to both the Nilotic and Bantu races; among the former its name is "*chieno*," and among the latter "*livoya*." The tail is made of fibre, usually obtained from an aloe called "*tuoro*." Among the Nilotic tribes it is stiff, and fairly short, rather like a bottle-brush, from six to eight inches in length. It is usually ornamented at the top by a few small white beads, or half-a-dozen cowries, and is of the natural colour of the fibre. Among the Bantu Kavirondo it is much thinner, and is, moreover, about twelve inches in length, dyed black, and very pliant.

Finding this peculiar attire among two such different races, one cannot help thinking that it was invented by one and copied by the other, and, if anything, I incline to the view that it was introduced by the Ja-Luo, and copied by the Bantu tribes. The Lur people to the west of Lake Albert, who are very closely allied, both in speech and name, to the Ja-Luo, wear it. The Wamia people on the west side of Elgon, who are also of Nilotic extraction, wear a more elaborate and highly developed form, while many of the women belonging to tribes in the Nile Valley wear a kilt of numerous narrow strips of leather, which, one would imagine, might be fined down to the tail behind, and to the little fringe, often worn in front.

L B 291 484 576

There is an interesting ceremonial connected with this article of dress.

The "*mkia*" is the special mark of the married woman; if, however, a young girl is going on a visit to another village, she can wear one on her journey, but must take it off directly she reaches her destination, and not don it again till she leaves. This is done as a sort of artificial protective mimicry; by wearing the tail she is taken for a married woman, and is not likely to be molested by anyone she may meet on the way.

L B 291 783

If a woman who has borne a child runs out of her house in a hurry—say, because she has been beaten—and goes into another house without the tail, the house she enters is considered unclean, and the husband has to give a goat, which

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4
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[783]

is killed on the doorstep of that house, before it is considered to be purified; the meat is divided between the aggressor and the owner of the house.

A woman is not entitled to don the tail immediately after marriage, but has to wait a month or two, the husband then presents her with a goat wherewith to purchase this important part of her trousseau.

Among the Bantu tribes, married women generally wear a small black fringe of fibre in front, but the Ja-Luo married women very rarely wear anything in front, the requirements of decency are, in their opinion, quite fulfilled if they have the tail. Ja-Luo girls, in their villages, are quite nude, but when they go to market, or to a dance, they wear, for ornament, a small fringe of various coloured beads strung on fibre. The Bantu women consider that the Ja-Luo tail is not at all a decent covering, and often jeer at them on this account. The chief Mumia thought that the tail might have originally been imitative of the tail of a cow. The Bantu Kavirondo have a superstition that, if a woman wears cloth round her loins she will not bear children.

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[842]

THE "MIKA" OPERATION UPON GIRLS AMONG THE GUASANGISHU AND NANDI.

Ceremonies attending the Operation on "Nditos" or young Unmarried Girls.

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The ceremony among the Guasangishu always take place about the time of the full moon, and is generally performed at sunrise. The proceedings commence the night before by a dance, and the young woman's head is shaved and oiled. At dawn, the old women decorate the young women with their iron necklaces, beads, and other ornaments. The young *elmoran* ("fighting men") of the neighbourhood come along, and the young woman kneels down, while each *elmoran* makes her a speech, and hands her his club and leg bells. The speech is to the effect that she has been brought up among them, fed and protected by them, and has slept with them, and that she is to bear the operation without a sound; if she cries out she will be disgraced among women, and must leave the settlement, but in order that she may not leave them empty-handed, she can take the clubs, etc., given by the *elmoran*, as a symbol that she will not start life empty-handed.

The people then proceed in a cluster to the scene of the operation, while the mother of the girl wails. The girl is then laid out on a skin, and the people stand round in a circle. An old woman sprinkles the *pudenda* with powdered wood ashes, and taking a small curved knife with a blade about 1½ inches long (Fig. 7) excises the *labia* and *clitoris*. Milk is then poured over the wound, and the old women run round, all crying out; this is done to drown any groan or cry she may unavoidably make. The girl stands up, and shakes a bunch of iron leg bells, and she is then wrapped in a skin, and taken away to her hut. During the operation, the girl is held in a reclining position, her head and shoulders resting in the lap of one old woman, while two other women hold each knee. Young and old of both sexes are allowed to be present at the ceremony.

FIG. 7.

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5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
South Kavirondo FL4

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Arabchebki, Lumbwa Chief.

Onduu : Kisumu Chief (Ja-Luo).

Gussangisha Warrior (Moran).

Ugada, Kisumu Chief (Ja-Luo).

[p.358 A]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4

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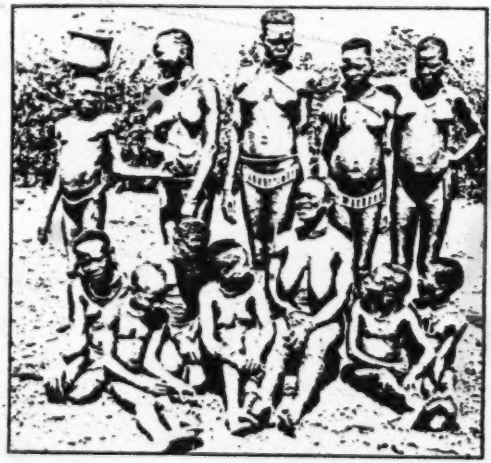
Jaluo Girl ; Kajulu Tribe.

Lumbwa Woman and Young Girl.

Ketosh Woman (N. Bantu).



Kisumu Girls.

[p. 358B]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11

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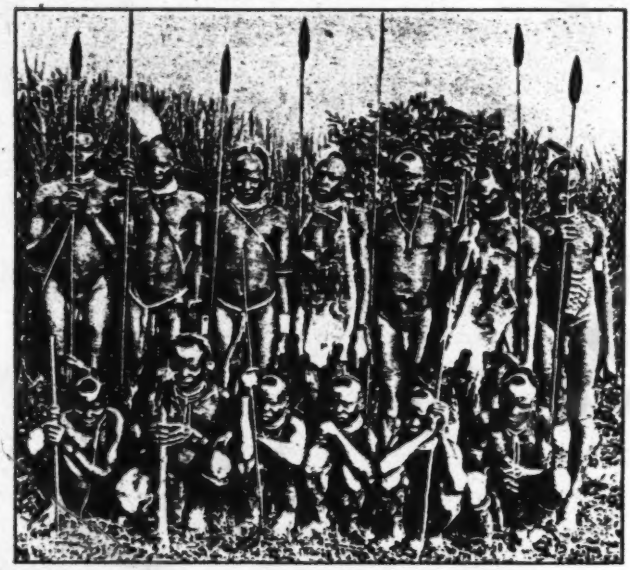

Koromojo Warriors.

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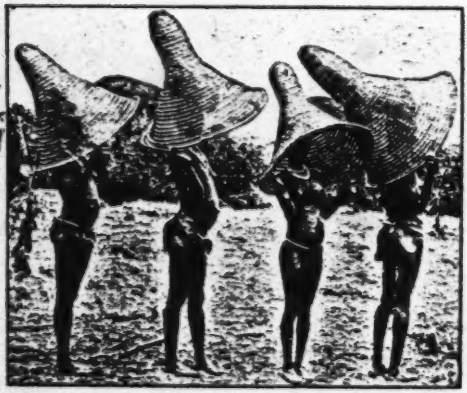

Fisherwomen; Kisumu.

Karungu Warriors (Ja-Luo).

[p.358]

6: Dobbs G-5 (no date)1927 FL11 Luo FL11

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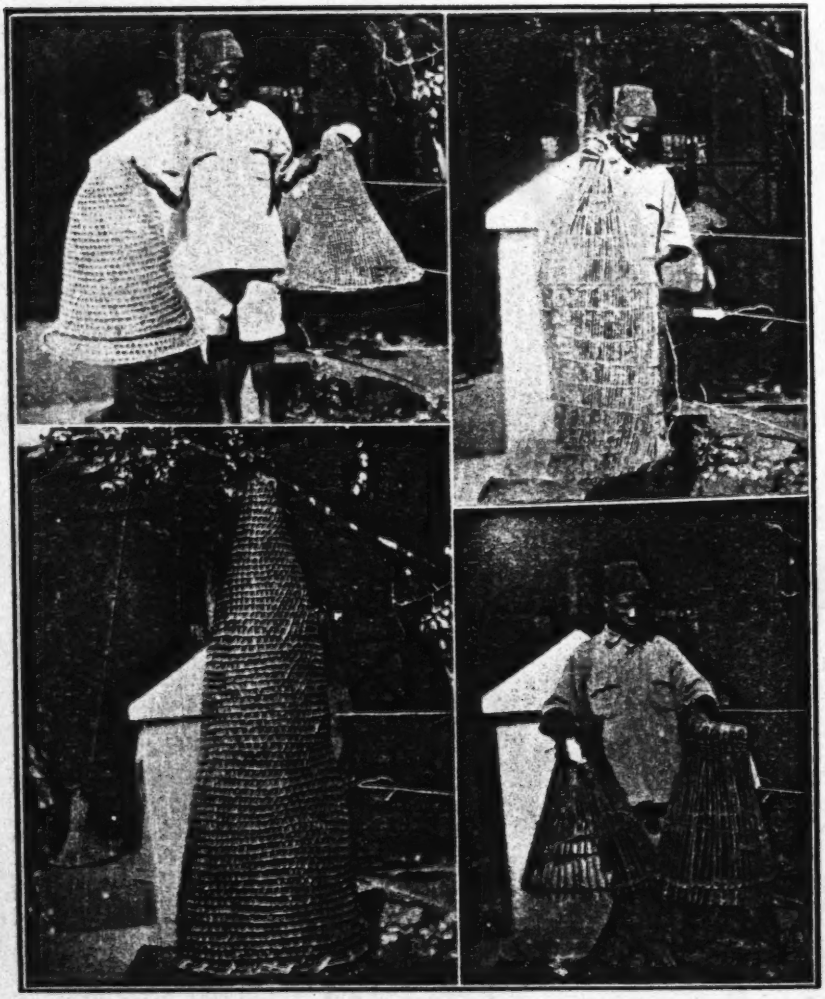

BASKET TRAPS.

1. Angu, used by women.
2. Angu, used by men.
3. Musati.
4. Sienyu.

[p. 100A]

584 dispose of it as he pleased. On her return a feast was held—the *tero nyako*—for her and her companions. Preparations for this feast were made before her arrival, and the guests invited and the kind of entertainment provided seems to have varied according to the family circumstances. If the parents were poor only the girl's sisters and the friends of her own age who had accompanied her were present; porridge and milk were set before them, and the guests returned on the same day to their own homes. But if the family was rich, older relations and friends of both sexes were invited and were given meat and beer. The quantity of beer required was often more than could be stored in the accustomed place, namely the hut belonging to the [343] girl's mother, and in this case a temporary shelter was built, known as the *siwandha*. It was constructed of reed mats between the mother's hut and the hut next to it, and if the number of reed mats available in the *dala* was insufficient, more were borrowed from the neighbours. After the beer had been drunk the *siwandha* hut was dismantled and its component parts returned to their owners. The [435 guests stayed two or even three days, and it was the convention that before their departure a final meal of meat or of a kind of dried fish 252] called *kabaka* (an expensive dish that cost a goat to buy) should be provided and cooked for them by the mother of the bride.

A sort of parallel to this feast known as *lupo* then took place in the bridegroom's *dala*, a cow or a goat being sent to him by the bride's parents to be killed and eaten by his brothers and sisters.

● 291 After the *tero nyako* and the *lupo* had taken place a bull known as the *dho golo onyimbo* was paid by the bridegroom, and with them 584 he sent a new *onyimbo*, specially made for her, to the bride. She then returned the *onyimbo* lent to her by the bridegroom's sister, and also took off the small *chieno* and burnt it, being now entitled to wear the big *chieno* of the married woman. This was a bunch of aloe fibre about ten inches long and thick enough to have a diameter of three or four inches. It was tied tightly at the top like a tassel, and was worn hanging from the small of the back, being attached to a string which passed round the waist. This, and a six inch square apron of fibre [177] string was all that a Luo woman wore, apart from her ornaments until the advent of the Indian trader with his cotton piece goods at the beginning of the century.*

[689] * Even now a woman who puts on a cotton dress when she leaves the *dala* sometimes reverts in the privacy of her home to the traditional nakedness adorned only by the tassel and the fringe, and often the dress is put on over the tassel. This curious ornament has clearly a ritual if not a magical significance, of which I hope to obtains details later. I was informed that if a man touches, accidentally or purposely, the tassel of a married woman, he has to pay a fine of three goats to her husband. Moreover, when a woman loses her husband she discards her tassel of aloe fibre and replaces it by one of banana fibre, and this tassel [781] apparently has maleficent properties. For if any man annoys her, she is likely to take it off and beat one of his cows with it, whereupon the cow is regarded as bewitched, and no one will buy it, or accept it in payment of a debt.

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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CHAPTER XXV

THE NILOTIC KAVIRONDO AND THEIR COUNTRY, GOVERNMENT, MARRIAGE, BIRTH AND PUBERTY

The tribe and their district—origin of the tribe—chiefs as rulers—land tenure—the local chief as the magistrate of his village—courts and court fees—making peace between two sections of the tribe—theft—adultery—murder—inheritance—marriage customs—distinctive dress of married women—birth customs—birth of twins—initiation at puberty.

101 **The tribe and their district.** The Nilotic Kavirondo are so named to distinguish them from the Bantu tribes of Kavirondo. They are a branch of the great family known as Nilotic tribes or tribes of the Nile Valley, and are quite distinct in language and custom from Bantu tribes. This particular branch may be found extending southwards from Mount Elgon along the coast of Lake Victoria Nyanza into German territory. They are settled in groups of villages among the Bantu and yet are quite distinct from them and do not intermarry with them. The clans met with live chiefly in the hills bordering on Lake Victoria. The mornings and evenings are comparatively cold in these hills, yet the people are absolutely destitute of clothing; indeed they consider clothing as indecent, and members who have been abroad and have adopted clothing are requested to put it away during their residence in their old homes. The features of the people are more closely allied to those of the pastoral tribes than to the Bantu. In stature the men are not, however, quite so tall as the Bahima, few of them reach six feet, five feet six to five feet eight being more usual. Their frame is slim like that of the Bahima, and the nose inclined to have a bridge. Again their love for cows is stronger than that of the Bantu. The women are shorter than the men, they are slim and athletic, a stout woman being seldom found; this may be accounted for by the amount of exercise they take and their constant activity in the field and home.

[p. 275]
[pp. xi-xii, 1-274 not processed]

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Plate XXII

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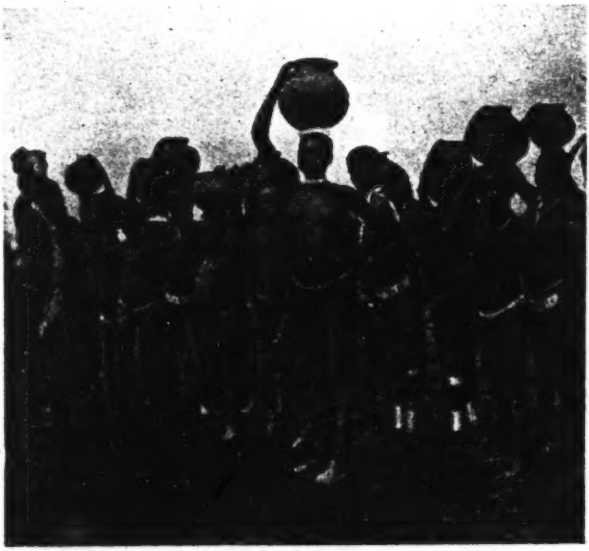

(1) Nilotic Kavirondo girls

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(2) Young women ready for initiation ceremony
(*Bagesu Tribe*)

[facing p. 276]

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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When A MAN MARRIES
591 a second or third wife, he may select another place for his new wife, either in the village near his former wife, or he may elect to take her to some other village. A man who has wives dwelling in different places lives with them in turn. Married
586 women are careful in regard to their relations with men. Should a woman be lax in her behaviour or encourage men to visit her, her husband will send her back to her parents and divorce her.

842 A wife who is proved to be sterile is not divorced, but her
595 parents send her sister to become the man's wife, and he is expected to pay another sum as a marriage-fee for her; but there is no stated time when the sum shall be paid after the woman goes to live with him. The former wife continues to live with him as his wife.

● 291 **Distinctive dress of married women.** Each woman after marriage makes a girdle with a long fringe at the back and ties the ends together, which gives it the appearance of a tail. The girdle is worn constantly during the husband's life-time,
[765] but, should he die, she takes it off and puts it on the house-roof over the door during the season of mourning to show that she is a widow and is mourning. After marriage a wife scarifies
304 her sides and back in addition to the scarifications she made at puberty. When a woman has a son born, she makes a
352 clay-mound in the middle of the floor in her house for the
852 food pot to rest on when the family are at meals.

Birth customs. A wife who expects her confinement calls
844 in an elderly woman to act as midwife. This woman is a person who has had experience in such matters and is herself a mother. When the child is born, the midwife cuts the umbilical cord on an axe handle if the child is a boy, and on a hoe handle if it is a girl. The placenta of a boy is buried outside on the right side of the doorway and that of a girl on the left side. During the first three days the father remains near the house
846 in which his wife and child lie, but the midwife alone enters and attends to the wants of the mother and child. On the third day the father takes a fowl and rubs it on the child's chest and turns it loose, when it becomes the property of the child. When the new moon appears, the parents bathe, and

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920) 1928 FL11 Luo FL11

with their buffalo-hide-shields and spears singing all the time. Meanwhile the heads of all the people of deceased's kraal except his wives are being shaven clean, whilst for this purpose they, in turn, are seated on a log of a thorn-tree, which is put across the main path leading to the village. 765 [302]

On the third day a billy-goat is killed and the meat is cooked and eaten by the women and girls of the kraal only, and an old woman gets the skin of the goat as a new skirt.

On the 4th day the relations go to the grave again and sweep it *(yweyo liel)* with a special kind of grass, putting some earth of the grave in an old basket. This is put in the middle of the path leading to the village, together with the log of wood (orindo) which deceased used to rest his head on when sleeping Nobody will afterwards touch these 2 articles; they are left there in the middle of the path. People will in future go past them, making a curve round them. — This explains why one very seldom finds a straight path leading to a kraal. — The hoe, which was used in digging the grave, is given to an old woman of an other part of the district, but the hoe handle is thrown away. Then all the relations living away from the kraal, and all the neighbours go home. [513]

When they have gone, the stick on top of the deceased hut, and those on the huts of all his women are broken by the grandchild of deceased or by some other small boy. This is a sign to anybody that the occupants of those huts are mourning.

After about two months the wives of deceased go to the village of their parents where they stay for two days, and a young bull is killed for them in honour of deceased. Before the wives have been home, they are not allowed to sleep anywhere but in the deceased husband's village, except under extraordinary circumstances, e. g. if a woman is not able to cross a river on the way home; in such cases she may sleep in another village, but only in the hut of an old woman. If she would break this rule, then the woman in whose hut she slept would not bring forth any children. [842]

Six months later beer is brewn for all the relations and neighbours, who come for the occasion. That day the grave is smeared with mud *(mwono liel)* and the women get their heads shaven for the first time since the death of their husband. Now also all the wives of deceased are disposed of; they go to either the brothers or the cousins of their former husband. The time of mourning is finished and the sticks are replaced on top of the huts by the same boy who broke them off. That night however the women sleep on the bare ground. That day the women wear new white tassels on their backs. These tassels are made as usual from the twisted marrow of papyrus stalks or of sisal-fibre. For since the death of their husband they have left off their ordinary tassel, which they replaced by a coarse untwisted one, made of the fibrous bark of the wild fig-tree. [291]

Then new huts are built for the women, if their new husbands live in another village, and when these are ready their former huts are broken down. If their new husbands live in the same kraal they keep their own huts, except if deceased was buried inside his hut. In this case a new hut is built and the old one is allowed to collapse over the grave. If deceased was buried in a little hut built over grave, then this hut is left till it tumbles down by itself. When later on somebody gets 768 769 753

buttermilk is used for making gruel which can be consumed by both sexes. Both buttermilk and fresh milk are used for cooking vegetables and fresh bovine blood for human consumption. The Luo do not slaughter their cattle for beef except for some special reason, for example, on the occasion of a special feast. The ordinary meat eaten is that of animals which have died as a result of disease or accident. If there is an outbreak of a serious disease and many animals die, their meat is made into biltong which can be stored for future consumption. Such biltong forms a very palatable diet when properly cooked with ghee. Girls do not eat the meat of cattle paid for their dowries.

Hides are used as sleeping mats, and for making shields, drums, sandals and special head-dresses on which ostrich feathers are fixed. Those of very young animals are used as clothes.

Cattle can be exchanged for millet or maize at any time, i.e., during famine or in good years; but cattle-owners tend to refuse millet or maize for their cattle after good harvests. This is one of the facts which support the argument of the Luo elders who prefer animals to crops. In exchanging cattle for goats and sheep, a bull is worth three to four goats and a heifer, six to eight goats or sheep. A goat or sheep is worth six to eight fowls.

The young men use young oxen for riding, and they sell heifers to buy buffalo hides for making shields or ostrich feathers for their adornment at funeral dances. Cattle accompany the mourners when attending funerals and, during inter-tribal wars, oxen were the companions of warriors on the battlefield. The horns make valuable trumpets and are used as containers for keeping powdered drugs. Tendons make strong strings for harps and bows. Cattle dung is useful for smearing houses and dry dung is good for the fire. Fresh blood as mentioned above makes a palatable food when mixed with milk and cooked. The scapula of small animals is used as a butter-scoop and for other domestic purposes. Hoofs are used for storing drugs and for running liquid medicines into the noses of both human and animal patients, e.g.. an infusion of a plant known in Luo as *jandarusi** is given in this way to cattle suffering from east coast fever. The long hair of the tail is used for trapping birds. The scrotum forms a valuable pocket.

Goats' milk is the food of the herd-boys when looking after animals in the pastures. They add the juice of a fruit† to the fresh milk and after a few minutes the milk coagulates and is ready for consumption. Goat skins are worn by both men and women and goat's meat is eaten by both sexes. The goat is the animal usually slaughtered for female visitors such as mothers and sisters-in-law. The chief produce from sheep is mutton

Dolichos sp. probably *D. Maitlandii*.
†*Solanum* sp. probably *S. incanum*, Sodom apple.—EDITOR.

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

near the entrance to the village, so that they can watch over any attempt to steal cattle. The hut which is directly opposite the gate of the village is usually that of the principal wife of the village head-man. There is much the same superstition as among the Bantu Kavirondo about shutting the door of a house behind a person who has just left it. [1]

Unmarried men go naked. Married men who have children wear a

498. HUSBAND AND WIFE, JA-LUO

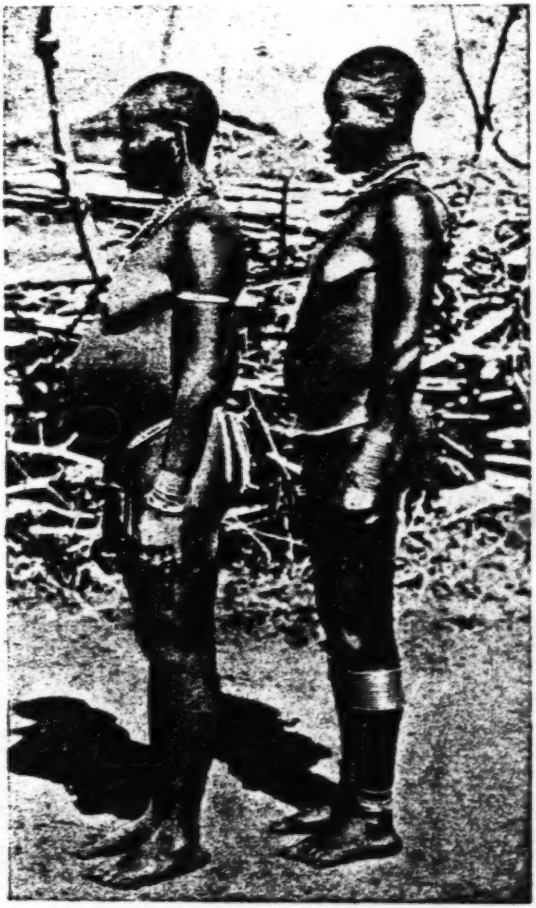
small piece of goat skin, which, though quite inadequate for purposes of decency, is, nevertheless, a very important thing in etiquette; for a married man with a child must on no account call on his mother-in-law without wearing this piece of goat skin. To call on her in a state of absolute nudity would be regarded as a serious insult, only to be atoned for by the payment of goats. Even if under the new dispensation a man

[1] [i.e.] A very bad omen; more the Bantu equivalent to divorce if it occurs between husband and wife. (See p. 752-not processed). -Analyst]

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

291 57% wears European trousers, he must have a piece of goat skin underneath. Unmarried girls wear no clothes. Married women wear a tail of strings

[301 142]



429. JA-LUO WOMEN: TAILS AND APRONS

behind. When they go to visit another village, they don a goat skin slung from the shoulder, upon which a curious and rather pretty pattern has been burnt with a red-hot stick. When a woman is married, she puts on

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

this tail behind and receives a present from her husband. Afterwards it is considered very bad manners for a married woman to serve food to her husband without putting on this tail. On the other hand, if the husband or any other man should touch the married woman's tail, it is considered that he wishes to bewitch her, and such an offence must be atoned for by the usual sacrifice of a goat.

430. PATTERN FREQUENTLY SHAVED ON MEN'S HEADS (JA-LUO)

The Ja-luo *pull out the incisors* in the lower jaw. It may also occur amongst these people, as amongst the Lango tribes to the north, that not only the four incisors, but even the canines, are taken out, at any rate from the mouths of boys. They *do not circumcise*, nor do they *scar or tattoo* their bodies, with the exception that women raise three parallel lines of dots in a semi-circle on either side of the body, the ends of the semi-circle meeting in front just below the navel, and again on the backbone. If a man has killed an enemy in war, he propitiates his enemy's spirit by shaving his head for three days after his return. Heads of men are also shaved in the pattern given in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 430).

The Ja-luo, together with tribes remotely allied in origin, such as the Sūk and Lango, *ornament the outer rim of the ear* in a remarkable manner. About fifteen small holes are pierced along the edge of the cartilage, and a flattened ring of brass (looking in shape rather like a melon seed) is inserted. Hanging on the outer side of the brass ring is a large blue glass bead. In the lowest hole towards the lobe a plain brass ring is inserted. Regarding these blue beads Mr. Hobley writes: "For a long time I thought these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of the variety known as 'kiketi'; but upon inquiry I found this idea was indignantly repudiated. It was explained to me that the beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood of the Maragolia Hills* after a heavy thunderstorm, and it was believed that they descended with the rain." Some of the chiefs also wear bits of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole. These beads were formerly of great value, and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead. They are said to have been picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is

* In North Kavirondo.

14: Johnston G-4. 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

301 "nyaluo." It is thought by some authorities that these have wandered down in past ages from the direction of Egypt—in fact, some of the

[142 291]

436. A JA-LUO MAN WITH EAR-RINGS

more northern Nilotic peoples declare that they came from the north or north-east. I imagine that the original possessors of these beads made considerable settlements in the neighbourhood of the Maraguša Hills,

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

and that the beads were constantly being dropped and lost in the fields. After floods the loosened soil might expose to sight some of the beads which had thus been dropped or thrown away. The supply of these blue

beads is, of course, quite inadequate for the population, and many are making up for the scarcity now by using the ordinary blue beads of commerce.

The Ja-luo men often wear an armlet of threaded cylindrical wooden

14: Johnston G-4. 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

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43. HEAD-DRESS OF FEATHERS AND BEAD AND ARM ORNAMENTS IN IRON WIRE OF JA-LUO MEN. (NOTE THE PROMINENT UPPER INCISOR TEETH, DUE TO THE LOWER INCISORS BEING REMOVED)

[p. 786]

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

blocks on the upper part of the arm. The wooden blocks are coloured red with oxide of iron. A band strung with small pieces of wood of the same colour is sometimes worn round the forehead. Some of the married men wear a semi-circle of ivory on the forehead, made of the split canine teeth of the hippopotamus. (The tooth, however, I am informed, is not split, but ground down until it is only an eighth of an inch thick.) Others wear the tusks of a wart-hog. The Ja-luo men, like most of the tribes of Nilotic origin, frequently adopt a curious stork-like attitude, standing on some hillock or ant-hill on one leg with the other leg bent and the sole of the foot apposed to the inner side of the knee of the leg on which the body is poised. They usually wear sandals of leather when travelling.

The Ja-luo live much by *agriculture*. They cultivate *sorghum, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, eleusine, pumpkins, tobacco, and hemp*. Salt is made from the ashes of reeds. They eat practically *all kinds of meat* except the hyæna. Young men eat leopard in order to make them fierce in war. The crested crane is universally protected, and is never killed. The women do not eat fowls, and some women do not eat sheep or eggs. Some eat hippopotamus, and some refuse that meat. Women do not drink milk, but eat it cooked with food. They have a disagreeable custom of mixing cows' urine with the milk of the cow. The urine is allowed to stand a day or two in order to increase its flavour. The people say that this admixture increases the amount of butter in the milk. They like the flavour, and think that it has medicinal value. They kill oxen by sticking a knife into the jugular vein. The head must be pointed to the west during the operation. Sheep and goats are killed in the same manner. Besides the flesh of fowls, cattle, sheep, and goats, they eat large quantities of fish, which they obtain from the rivers, and, above all, from the waters of the Victoria Nyanza.

Cooking is done entirely by women in earthen pots inside the hut or on the verandah, and the food is served in little wicker baskets. Father and sons eat together in a little separate hut which has open sides. Women eat separately from the men inside their own houses.

They do not *hunt* much with dogs, but catch a good deal of game in pitfalls. They will also attack the elephant with spears. Fish is caught in the Victoria Nyanza by means of large, conical wicker traps called "dema." The process is as follows: They bring two very long ropes, one end of each of which is firmly secured to the shore. One rope lies, weighted, along the bottom under the water, the other floats on the surface, but from it hangs a fringe of papyrus stalks. The two ropes above and below correspond with its other, and are connected at intervals with strings to ensure their correspondence, while the fringe of papyrus

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

THE NILOTIC KAVIRONDO.

By G. A. S. Northcote.

101 The Nilotic Kavirondo, or Jaluo as they should more properly be called, who inhabit the north-eastern shore of the Victoria Nyanza, belong to the same family as the great Dinka tribe of the Soudan and are near relations of the Aluri and Acholi tribes which live on both sides of the Nile near Wadilai, the differences being far less marked than those between two adjoining Bantu tribes usually are.

174 In all probability, therefore, the Jaluo originally formed one tribe with the Acholi. What their reasons for migration were cannot be ascertained, but probably it was due to overcrowding or to a dispute about the chieftaincy. The natives themselves can throw but little light on the matter: they state that they came from the north-west under one big chief and that when they *again* became too numerous they split up into smaller chieftaincies. The fact that they lay stress on their again increasing numbers points to the conclusion that overcrowding [626] was their motive for migrating; but as will be seen later, they use secession as their chief weapon against an unpopular chief. Had they been driven out by conquest there would be abundant traces of such a cause, but no such signs are visible.

142 In appearance the Jaluo are a fine race, not so much remarkable for beauty of face as for stature and development. They are a large-boned and deep-chested tribe, somewhat fleshy and very muscular. They present a great contrast in this last respect to the other Nilotic tribes in British East Africa, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa. All four are capable of great endurance, but none of the last three named can claim to be a muscular race. The superior physique of the Jaluo is probably [262] due mainly to their agricultural and industrial habits and to the fact that their food is mainly vegetable, while up to the great cattle plague of 1883, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa lived entirely upon animal food.

Facially the Kavirondo have rather squat noses, large mouths and big wide-opened eyes. The everyday dress of the men consists of a goat skin hung over the ●291 right shoulder, or of nothing. In most cases they have quantities of iron wire on [30] their legs and arms and strings of beads round their necks. The women are usually completely nude, except that married women wear a small grass tassel behind, hanging from the waist; latterly, however, they have taken to wearing a strip of cloth round the waist about six or eight inches in breadth and only just meeting in front.

[58] The tassels are discarded when a woman's husband dies and cannot be again worn until she is re-married. It is significant of the respect which the Jaluo have

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

towards marriage, that anyone who touches this tassel has to pay a fine of three goats to the husband.

The women do not wear iron wire to the same extent as their husbands and brothers. These may frequently be seen with from six to ten pieces wound round their arms and legs, which shine from constant rubbing and polishing with oil and fat. Happily there are signs that this wire is going out of fashion, whereby they will be spared the sores and ulcers which are its continual accompaniment. Trade generally will thus be put upon a sound cash basis instead of resting as it has done upon a precarious footing of barter. The Jaluo, who are keen traders, have begun to realise the advantages of the rupee over the iron, being helped to this conclusion by the necessity of having to pay three rupees a year for every hut.

The Jaluo full dress is very striking. A huge hat of monkey or goat skin, or of feathers, often of ostrich, surmounts a well-oiled visage which is ornamented by lines of small white beads across the forehead, nose, upper lip and chin and fastened behind the ear. Round the neck are strings of beads, brass cartridge cases, fetishes, and a round or two of iron wire. Across the chest and sometimes down the back are rows of cowries sewn on to strips of leather; and over the right shoulder hangs a big black feather boa, or an ornament made of the long hair from the wildebeest's tail. The everyday goat skin is discarded. Round the waist they fasten strings of iron beads which they manufacture from iron wire; the iron has an extra polish, and from it depend bunches of feathers. The body is well oiled and sometimes covered with red clay or charcoal. Finally they fasten to the knee and ankle small bells made of iron wire in the shape of broad-bean pods and with one or two small iron beads inside.

Their weapons consist of a spear with a long haft and a short blade, a Masai sword on the right hip and occasionally a bow and arrows instead of the spear. Their shields are very large and heavy, made of buffalo hide and of a peculiar shape; vertically they are about three feet six inches in height; horizontally nearly six feet in length and curved back so that the left side, back and front of the warrior are covered; they are painted red, white and black, often in artistic designs. These designs probably at one time indicated to what family the owner belonged; to-day, however, this idea, if it ever existed, seems to have quite disappeared, each man painting on his shield the pattern which pleases him most. Further investigation on this subject should be made in order to make certain whether the patterns have any peculiar meaning.

Some wear the hair long, twisting it into long thin strings and dressing it with oil and red clay or charcoal. Others partially shave the head, always leaving at least one little tuft, which is cut off and worn by the chief mourner at the owner's funeral. Sometimes the body is striped or spotted with yellow clay in imitation of the zebra or leopard.

Politically the Jaluo are in a semi-feudal state; the tribe is divided up into larger or smaller chieftaincies or clans, which correspond to the old baronies, but there is no one overlord to make the resemblance complete. Nominally the chiefs

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

857 ing interest in her body and in the opposite sex. It may
856 be said that the loss of concern for her charge and concentration on herself is a sign announcing the emotional disturbances of adolescence. Young girls of this age now

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NURSE: AYOMA

857 consider nursing beneath their dignity, and their revolt
856 is encouraged by increasing association with members of the opposite sex who would disdain talking to a child-nurse.

855 *Feeding.* The girls of this age group eat normal adult
264 food, at the same time as adults, but the younger members of the group occasionally have a little food kept for them by their mothers. The consideration shown them as children depends on whether there are others younger

1 [i.e. From six to eleven years old – Analyst.]

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
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593 with the male children. Maternal control over the
855 young girl is very great and remains about the same when she reaches adolescence, though at this time the father's control becomes increasingly essential in keeping the growing personalities of the family in order.

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YOUNG GIRLS GOING TO FETCH WATER

857 THE BEGINNING OF SPECIALISED ACTIVITIES

868 The school-going age marks the period when male and female children part company. Young girls become increasingly occupied with domestic work, such as fetching water and firewood, tending babies and watching the fire, while male children of the same age continue to play in groups for a much longer period. Apart from herding, which is now less general than in the past, boys of school-

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

the mother. Thus the adolescent girl enjoys the freedom of being able to do most of her domestic work independently. Unless strict discipline is exercised she spends much of her time meeting her male friends. The thought of marriage begins to assume a reality and to become an influential factor in her attitude and movements. The self-love which made its first conspicuous appearance during the preceding age now takes the form of an effort to make herself look more attractive. Holes may be made in the ears from which to suspend ear-rings, and all sorts of armlets or bands are worn round the wrists. Clothes or head-dresses of bright colours are specially chosen. Although the practice is fast dying out, girls of this age used also to be addicted to tattooing their backs. Better clothing is among the most pressing needs of adolescent girls, and their families must either make sacrifices or else persuade the girl to make do with what is available.

The attitude of the parents. The attitude of parents towards an adolescent girl is greatly concerned with her economic value and her ability to do domestic work efficiently. An added consideration is the girl's conduct, both in and outside the family circle.

Hence, a girl's ability to work well in the house gives her mother a satisfaction which finds an outlet in conversation with other women. The mother strives to put forward the merits of her daughter as well as her social conduct in the community, while the young girl becomes almost mistress of the house, her mother hardly touching the work—especially when there is more than one adolescent daughter. The shock experienced when the girl is married is a matter which some of the envious neighbours do not refrain from mentioning.

On the other hand, a daughter who is inefficient in domestic work is no credit to her mother's reputation.

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
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Peter Hill

THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF A MARKET

[p. 52]

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

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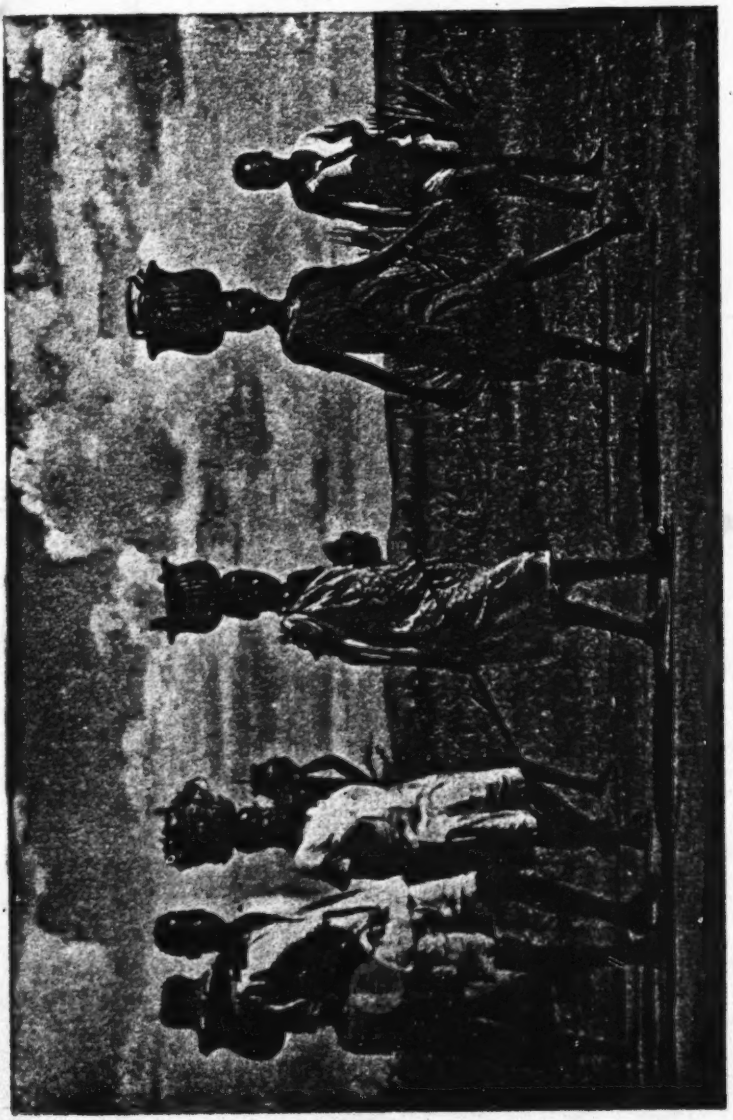

Peter Hill

THE END OF A MARKET DAY

[p. 54]

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
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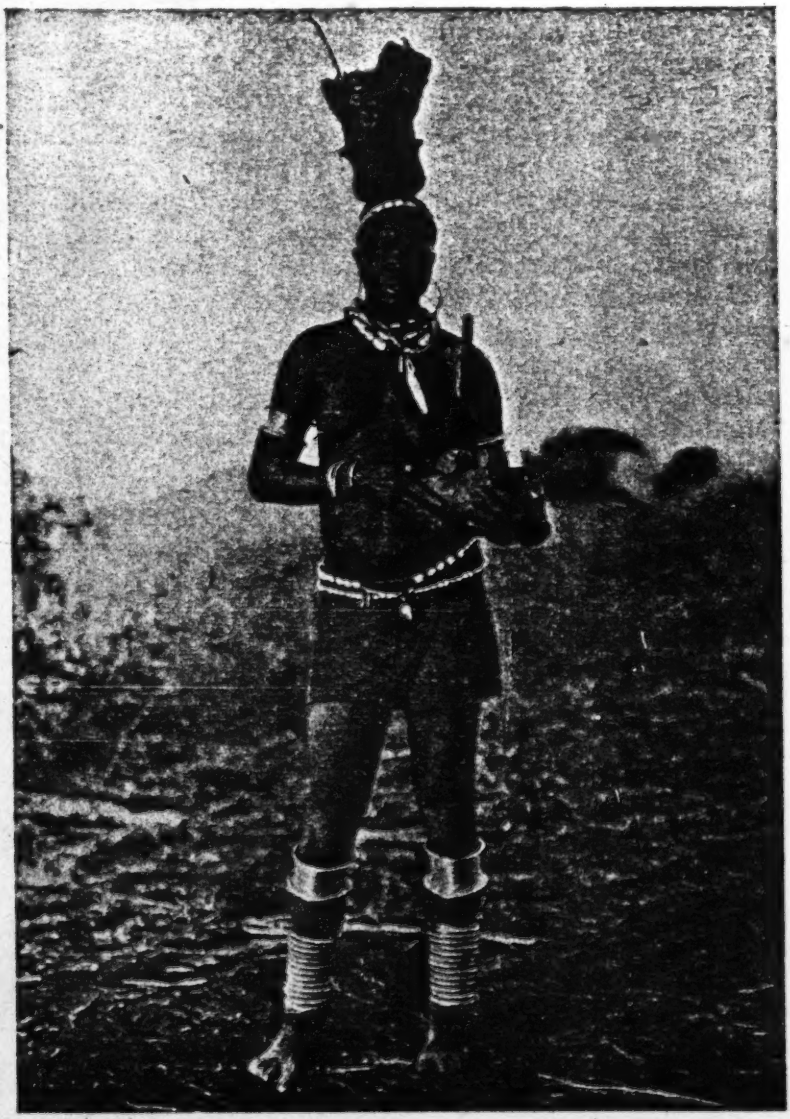

E. N.

AN ELDERLY WOMAN WITH SOME OF HER FOOD

[p. 56]

21:Huxley Q, T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo FL11

Behind and beyond are old beliefs that are still alive. A man can lay upon a piece of land, when he is dying, an oath that binds his heirs to hold on to it for ever, and will destroy anyone who sells it out of the family—an entail with the sanction of magic. And then old homesteads on the Kano plains sheltering behind euphorbia hedges contain the bones of the deceased owner, who is buried under the floor of his hut. So consolidation may ask the son to exchange not merely a field of maize, but the bones of his father, the terrestrial anchor of his father's spirit. No wonder it is often too much to ask, and that politicians find these deep fires easy to fan.

To reach Nyabondo we climbed a small escarpment, the beginning of the Kipsigis hills, left the car beside a track and walked to the farm of a young, pleasant-mannered school supervisor called James Onyango, one of the leaders of the enclosure movement. We sat under a tree near his new tin-roofed modern bungalow, above a shallow valley with a stream. The country here is gently rolling and thickly dotted with roofs of homesteads. Many people had gathered in a circle; the women sat together in bright cottons and gay head-scarves, plump and glossy, most of them with grave-faced, round-eyed babies sleeping in their arms or crawling about the grass beside them. This question of land touches the women at the core. James Onyango told his story in English.

'The idea of exchanging gardens came to us two years ago; we had heard of it in other places; most of us were interested, and asked the Government to advise. We held a meeting and agreed unanimously to consolidate, all of us within the Kadianga clan, fifty-nine families. In our clan are three sub-clans; each appointed three men to form a committee. Each of these three was a *m'guru*—an elder whose task is to look after the land, and one of these was made the president.

'We started to exchange our gardens, and at first everything was fair. Then came elections for the Legislative Council and the District Council. The candidates thought they would gain popularity by speaking against the land schemes. They campaigned among the people, and some listened. They had clever ways. In each sub-location they had an agent who

21:Huxley Q, T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo FL11

797 871 fifty years later their son, Mr. Paddy Savile, after many years' service in Tanganyika, was to become Chief Agriculturalist to the Government and help to make a path for Progress through the land of his birth. Maseno mission was envisaged as 'a Christian base from which the Gospel might be carried far and wide into the surrounding country, with a school for the sons of Luo chiefs at which future leaders of the country would be trained in a Christian atmosphere.'

Four small boys called Onduso, Odindo, Owiti and Oroa were drafted from Kaimosi to form a nucleus and every 'chief' was asked to contribute two sons. 'Chief' was an arbitrary term, and the leading Luo objected strongly to the disappearance of their sons, probably regarding it as another form of slavery. In those days the Luo went stark naked, used [291] [436] [301] beads or hoes for currency, and prized most highly the black ostrich feathers which warriors wore as head-dresses.

'In five years' time a hundred small boys from the school were sent out, two by two, for a fortnight at a time, to teach in Kisumu and in the villages. Then they came back to Maseno for a month for further teaching. In this way the original Iona idea began to be realized and Maseno became a base of Christian influence.' Bishop Willis developed this idea in a letter: 'It affords a shelter amid a sea of temptation; it makes Christian teaching applicable and Christian living a possibility.'*

[873] [874] So from four small and doubtless bewildered boys under a tree, Maseno developed until by the time of its golden jubilee it embraced primary, intermediate and secondary schools, a teacher-training college, a Jeanes school for adult education, a college for agricultural instructors and veterinary scouts. Even the girls had by this time been included, although their education for years lagged far behind that of their brothers.

668 At the time of my visit this part of Nyanza was a-buzz with rumour and diatribe, for the District Council in Kisumu had just been dissolved by Governor's decree. To balance the official line on this, I asked to meet a firebrand or two, and everyone agreed that Maseno was the place for a crackle of

[113] *From *Fifty Years in Nyanza*, by Elizabeth Richards, M.A. Maseno Press. 1956.